Mal 2:10 Have we not all one Father? hath not one God created us.
John 17:3 And this is life eternal - that they might know thee the only true God.

IS GOD A PERSONALITY?

The tendence of science to impersonalize God and the rapid growth of cults which reduce God to a Principle.

But what difference does it make afteral? whether God be a personal being or an impersonal one? Is this question but speculative and inconsequential? Is it worth our while to consider it for even a half hour?

As a result of study and reflection I have reached the conclusion that this question is one of the most vital and practical that we could ask ourselves.

If God is not a person, if the divine spirit in whom we live and move and have our being is not personal as we are personal, and if God cannot be addressed as Father and Friend, as one who watches over us and cares for us and loves us, then why should we build churches, or say prayers, or worship God or do the deeds of righteousness and love?

If God be but a substance, an energy, a law, a Principle, what sense is there in trying to obey the will of Substance or love Law or worship energy?

Whatreason, then, have we for thinking of God as Person and worshipping Him as "Our Father who art in heaven?

I. First, what do we really mean by Personality?

1. Physical appearances are not marks of personality. Size, color, shape can be applied to animals and plants and stones as well.

The description of higher beings in terms of physical attributes common to ancients ~~and~~ Mythological gods. Hebrew God.

The modern mind finds it impossible to think of God as having physical aspects.
Walking in the garden with Adam and Eve.
Talking as we do. But in sofar as we have made it impossible for us to see God as with our eyes and hear Him with our ears and feel him with our hands, we have made it the much more difficult for us to see God at all.

2.The case of Mary Reynolds, described by Prof. James. 1811 in the lilderness of W. Pa. - Dual personality--same body.

Conclusion: Personality is not material but spiritual; not a body but a soul.

Proposition: if we find in the universe the same distinctive marks of personality as we find in human bodies, are we not justified in concluding that Spirit is personal, that God being Spirit is personal and that we being essentially spirit ane also personal?

II.Some of the distinctive marks of Personality.

1. Rationality.
The mechanical chess-player in the Eden Musee, N.Y. many years ago.
This mechanical device a mask, back o of it a person playing the game. Why? it takes a mind to play chess!

2.Feeling. Capacity for emotion.
Man not a full personality wothout feelings.
Herbert Spencer.
Christ full of compassion, the perfect man.

3.Unity.

In the case of Mary Reynolds why do we conclude there were two separate and distinct persons? Because all the t thots and emotions of each personality were united together into one consistent whole, but the two were not related to each other or confused with each other. When, behind all thot and emotion, there is one mind, one will, one purpose, one soul, one spirit, we have a single undivided self, one personality.

III. Can these marks of personality be applied to God?

1.Is there a universal unity?

Haeckel, in his Riddle of the Universe points out ~~to be~~ the one basic fact of the universe to be unity which he calls Monism.

Tessyson:

"one law, one element,
And one far-off event,
To which the whole creation moves"

The word Universe implies Unity.

2.Is the universe rational?

Man has always seen evidende of divine mind in all created things.
Argument from Design.

Evolution destroyed argument from Design and for awhile it looked as tho all trace of divine mind was destroyed.

But the very processes of evolution soon revealed the divine mind as it had never been seen before.

From inorganit to organit
~~From organic to~~

From vegetable to animal.
From animal to man.

Mo rationality to this? no thot? no mind?

3. Is there a universal Love? This is by far the hardest of our marks of personality to demonstrate. It has to be experienced before we can see it. We have got to feel it for ourselves before we can make others see it.

How can my own indivvidual enperience settle this question then? But why should I settle this question by my own exclusive experience any more than ~~I~~I settle others questions?

I go into an art gallery and view a picture famed the world over for beauty and value. But I see neither beauty nor balue in it. What do I conclude? that the picture is worthless and of no value? No. But that I have still to learn a great deal about pictures.

I go to an opera. But the music is meaningless to me.

Was not the one word of Jesus about the lillies of the field far more meaningful than the centuries of silence on the part of the Palestinian peasants who say nothing in them whatever?

Then, if my own personal experience fails to discover Love in the universe, why should I not accept the testimony of others who have experience the love of God and whose spiritual eyes do discern a divine Love in all creation, in all history?

5. RECOGNIZING A UNIVERSAL UNITY, A UNIVERSAL RATIONALITY AND A UNIVERSAL LOVE WHY SHOULD WE NOT SEE IN MAN A REFLECTION OF GOD, AND BETWEEN GOD AND MAN A MEANS OF COMMUNION WITH EACH OTHER?

Hindrances to our communion with God.

1. As tho we were carrying on a conversation with a person who never speaks to us, who never answers us directly.

The minister's converstaion with congregation

The mechanical instrument for radio speaking

2. Our scientific atmosphere in which all appears to be fixed by law and order makes our attempts to speak audibly to a supposed Diving Being who hears and answers seem foolish.

We have not applied our scientific knowledge to a better and more complete understanding of God--we have not thot our problems thru and have become victims of our half-baked knowledge.

Science is coming to realize spiritual forces.

We need to develop the psychic instinct in us. We need to cultivate our point of direct contact with God, until we are on speaking terms with Him.